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"Lyric Truth" Exhibit Catalogue

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Lewis and Clark College

Prudence F. Roberts

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LYRIC TRUTH

ROSEMARIE BECK

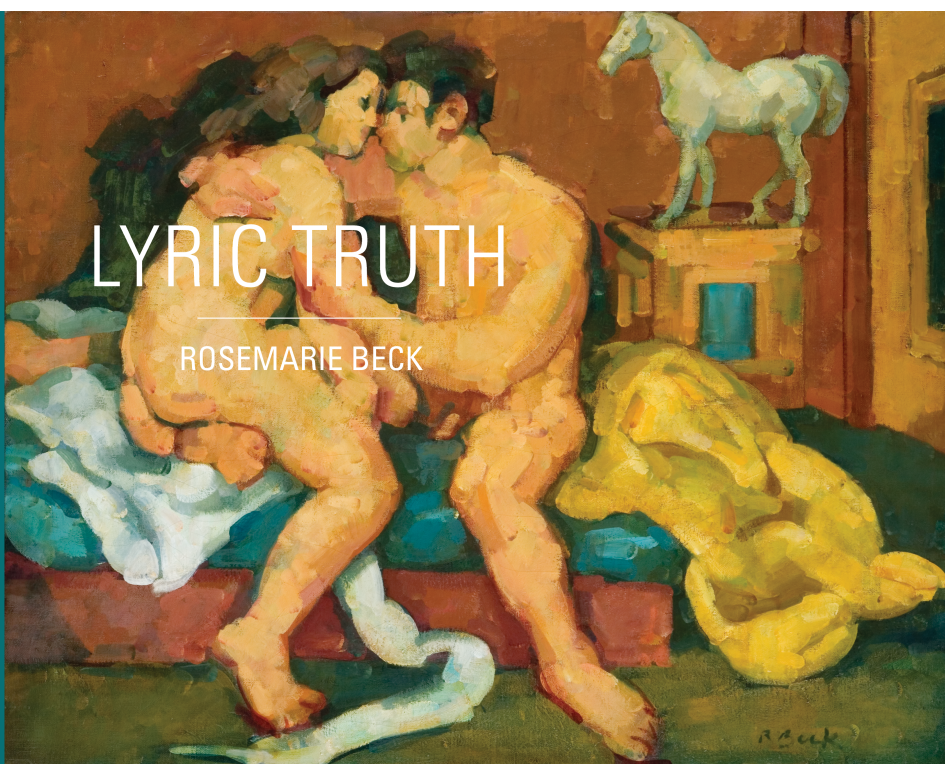
Portland State
UNIVERSITY

College of the Arts
PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

A+D
SCHOOL OF ART AND DESIGN

Portland
Community
College

OREGON DESIGN MUSEUM AND
CENTER FOR HIGHER-LEVEL EDUCATION



LYRIC TRUTH

PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS, AND EMBROIDERIES
BY ROSEMARIE BECK



Rosemarie Beck, Woodstock, New York, 1948 (photo by Robert Phelps, courtesy Rosemarie Beck Foundation, New York)

LYRIC TRUTH

PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS, AND EMBROIDERIES
BY ROSEMARIE BECK

Edited by Sue Taylor

With essays by
Nora Beck
Prudence F. Roberts
Patricia A. Schechter
Namita Gupta Wiggers

**College of the Arts
Portland State University**

Catalogue published in connection with the exhibition "Lyric Truth: Paintings, Drawings, and Embroideries by Rosemarie Beck" presented at:

Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education, Portland, 14 January–22 March 2015

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Sponsors:

Lewis & Clark College; Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education; Portland Community College Rock Creek; Portland State University College of the Arts, Department of History, Friends of History, School of Art and Design.

Catalogue edited by Sue Taylor, Professor of Art History, Portland State University

Design by PSU A+D Projects, Ryan Ricketts, Hallie Walker, Bryan Zentz

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Cover: Rosemarie Beck, *Two with Horse*, 1964, oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in., cat. 39, Collection of Nora Beck, Portland (photo by Loren Nelson)

Foreword

A private, non-profit organization, the Rosemarie Beck Foundation was established in 2003 to preserve the values, ideals, and artistic/pedagogic/literary output of the painter and teacher Rosemarie Beck (1923-2003). The Foundation houses and cares for her art and is cataloguing her paintings and drawings and transcribing her writings. Our Board supports research, exhibitions, and publications reflecting her aesthetic and honoring the mentoring and collegial spirit that are the artist's legacy.

We wish to thank Professor Patricia A. Schechter for initiating this project and her colleagues at Portland State University Dean Wm. Robert Bucker and Professor Sue Taylor for supporting it, as well as Provost Jane Atkinson and Professor Nora Beck, Lewis & Clark College; Judith Margles, Director, Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education; Professor Prudence F. Roberts, Portland Community College Rock Creek; and all those at their respective institutions who have worked so hard on these exhibitions and made them possible.

Martha Hayden
Vice President
Rosemarie Beck Foundation

Community Partners' Statement

With three different exhibition venues, the multifaceted project "Lyric Truth" could have been too complicated to achieve. To the great fortune of all parties, that was not the case. The collaborative energy among representatives of the partner organizations succeeded because of our focus on one goal: to introduce Portland audiences to the ambition and talent of Rosemarie Beck and the beauty of her art.

"Lyric Truth" began, as projects often begin, around a kitchen table. Our first conversation in the home of Beck's niece, Nora Beck, quickly focused on the artwork, the artist's life, project timeline, logistics, and budget. At no time did we question the feasibility of our challenging endeavor. We simply gave ourselves fourteen months and went to work. The enthusiastic support of our respective institutions buoyed our efforts, especially that of Dean Bucker at Portland State University. "Lyric Truth" now proudly stands before you as a testament to this ideal partnership.

Judith Margles
Director
Oregon Jewish Museum and Center
for Holocaust Education

Prudence F. Roberts
Curator
Helzer Gallery, Portland Community
College Rock Creek

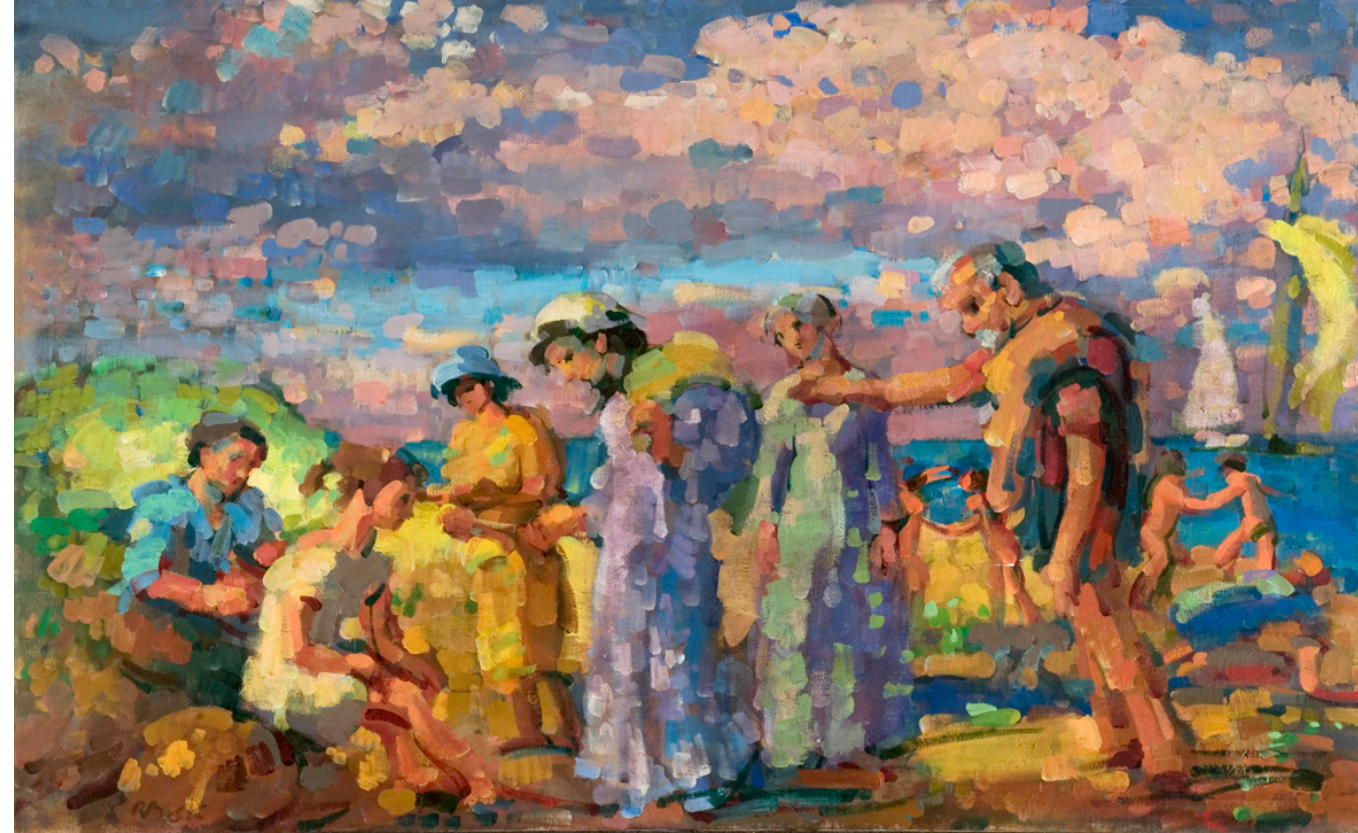
Preface and Acknowledgments

With “Lyric Truth,” the College of the Arts is proud to introduce to Portland’s cultural community the remarkable work of Rosemarie Beck. In love with music, drama, and art history, Beck was devoted to the creative life. She was a violinist, a consummate painter, draftswoman, needleworker, and zealous journal writer for whom mythical figures such as Icarus and Antigone or Shakespeare’s Prospero lived and breathed as avatars of artistic and moral choices. All this and her instruction of younger artists through years of multiple teaching appointments make her an especially fitting subject for investigation and interpretation in the College of the Arts. So rich in fact are the avenues of exploration associated with Beck’s life and work that this project has yielded three concurrent exhibitions and the enthusiastic collaboration of our community partners, Portland Community College and the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education. That Beck was the daughter of Hungarian Jewish immigrants and a colleague in New York at mid-century among Jewish intellectuals such as Philip Guston, Bernard Malamud, Meyer Schapiro, and others establishes her relevance for the Museum whose mission includes the research and exhibition of art and artifacts of the Jewish people.

Beck struggled with the marginalization that afflicted other women artists of the time, such as Lee Krasner and

Helen Frankenthaler, but while these latter ultimately achieved some measure of renown, Beck’s bold turn from abstraction to classical themes conveyed in figurative paintings prolonged her status as an outlier. Thus what she called “lyric truth” in beautiful artworks addressing ambition, hubris, love, duty, or erotic desire becomes for us a kind of truth that also entails the courage of one’s own convictions. We hope that Beck will prove exemplary in this way for students seeking to forge their own artistic identities—students here in the College of the Arts and those at Portland Community College whose stated values include the expression of original ideas. Beck’s expression burst forth in joyous drawings of the human body as well as in dense and colorful embroideries done for the home, and in large, rigorously organized paintings in the Grand Manner she admired. In its multiple venues, “Lyric Truth” offers examples of Beck’s work in all these mediums.

The exhibition’s organizers join me in acknowledging the generosity of Martha Hayden and Doria A. P. Hughes of the Rosemarie Beck Foundation, as well as Lori Bookstein Fine Art, New York, and Nora Beck, James W. Rogers Professor of Music at Lewis & Clark College, in lending works of art. We are grateful to Lewis & Clark Provost Jane Atkinson and to the Friends of History at Portland State University for helping to underwrite this catalogue, and to the essayists whose orig-



The Tempest, Act IV, 1, 1979, cat. 17 (photo by Loren Nelson)

inal scholarship herein honors the artist’s legacy. Finally, our outstanding students in the School of Art and Design at Portland State merit recognition for designing the catalogue and proofing the text; they are Ryan Ricketts, Hallie Walker, and Bryan Zentz in Graphic Design and Allison Baer in Art History. To them, and to all who contributed to this intricate collaboration, our sincere thanks.

Wm. Robert Bucker
Dean, College of the Arts
Portland State University

Rosemarie Beck's Struggle to History

A Painter's Writings, 1949–1965

Patricia A. Schechter

"Say I wasn't nice," quipped Rosemarie Beck to one of her last painting students at Queens College in New York.¹ Her disarming imperative evokes the idea of the nice girl or nice Jewish girl, indicating Beck's resistance to sexual containment and tribal fidelity. She became an artist at a time when educated women found it hard to avoid the selfless, domestic ideal of femininity touted by the media and popular psychology. "The wish to please will defeat me," she fumed in her journal, where she documented her efforts to avoid such defeat.² Beck gave nice the slip by being *farouche*, French for fierce, almost unfriendly, and emotionally austere. *Farouche* meant being relentlessly outrageous and allowing oneself no settled loyalty. Over time, through teaching, she devised an alternate persona she called "Old Academe," a lightly mocking reference to European art academies, with their rigorous devotion to classical forms. Old Academe balanced Beck's rebellious impulse by connecting her to a history, especially of figurative painting. "O yes, yes," she promised herself in 1954, in the throes of abstraction and what I want to call her struggle to history, "someday I will go back to the figure" (2:29).

In the meantime, *farouche* caught the mood of modernist painting in Manhattan, where she lived. In the late 1940s, Beck had studied with abstract expressionist painters, whose emphasis on interior,

psychological modes distanced them from the politics and nationalisms that had torn up the world with war. Robert Motherwell and restive fellow painters gathered together into a group called the Irascibles, abandoning the stodgy midtown scene to show at small galleries like the Stable or Peridot. Though women artists, including Beck, made up between 20 and 30 percent of those showing at the Stable in the 1950s, there was a masculinist glint to this creative surge.³ Ambitious publicists termed these painters (and poets) the "New York School," lauding artistic innovation as the "hero's life." Such a life "requires manliness," Beck grouched in her journal. "How then can a woman made into a woman assume a man's role" (4:13), she wondered.

Being *farouche* was Beck's way of upending such expectations, in line with her belief that there was "no sex in art" (6:54). At the easel, she cultivated a state of gender plasticity beyond social embodiment, a state she expressed in painting as "true lyricism" or "sensuous flux" (3:218). As her mentor and friend Philip Guston asserted, "It's a long, long preparation for a few moments of innocence" with the brush.⁴ To nourish those moments, Beck craved "presences...stories, beauty, perfection, order" (4:115). Art as illusion-making stoked its own hunger, and Beck fed her imagination with classical music, Greek mythology, Shakespeare, even astrology. Her craving for narrative anti-



Rosemarie Beck with Philip Guston at a costume party, c. 1957 (photo courtesy Rosemarie Beck Foundation, New York)

pated Guston's famous renunciation in the late 1960s of abstract "purity" in painting in favor of telling stories. Beck conveyed something of their common dilemma in her essay "In My Studio." "Pure lyricism is not self-sustaining," she announced, declaring abstraction to be "boring and empty."⁵ "I wanted to say something," she continued, "and for this I needed a referent in the outside world." In her journal, she lamented the situation of abstract artists stranded in the "ether of our consciousness" (3:6). The

Freudian bent of the 1950s had left artists flailing, "mercilessly impaled upon our private feverish egos" (2:54), as she put it. Struggling to history, Beck fretted over "losing my past" and "losing my memory" (4:45). To blunt the pain of imminent loss, Beck taught herself to "love things without a future" (3:137), a tart contradiction that drained as much as it primed her spirit. She needed regular infusions of subject matter and inspiration. A journal entry noting how remote she was from her family's



Rosemarie Beck in her New York studio, 1966 (photo courtesy Rosemarie Beck Foundation, New York)

Judaism ended with a resolution to “begin a systematic self-education beginning with history” (3:266).

In this period of transition, begun around 1958, Old Academe steadied Beck as she moved from abstraction to the glorious figurative painting for which she is best remembered today. She started with a big idea. Contra the thin gruel of non-objective subjects, Beck hatched the “theory that story-telling figure painting is the wave of the future” (6:69). She considered herself an abstract artist whose ideal subject was “a real body, all painted” (2:34). Beck maintained her *farouche* stance by calling her move to figuration a “pact with the devil”

(6:70), since she was “painting what I want to paint” (5:148), neither buckling to old tradition nor chasing after new trends. She stuck with her truth, “never form, but forming,” she insisted, as her expressive ideal.⁶

In a pinch, any span of time can be dubbed a history, and eventually Beck copped to a “sense of personal history” in her writing. She mused that “vapours” wafting from “ephemeral states of mind” (3:155) clouded her journal whilst that of her husband, writer Robert Phelps, documented “specific details, dates, encounters” (4:13)—and was later published.⁷ This contrast draws our attention to women’s difficulty in claiming and writing history.

Beck nonetheless encouraged her students to paint “with a sense of history, their history” (3:123). By working for wages and protecting Phelps from the need to earn a living, however, Beck was being a good Jewish wife. In the eastern European tradition, the wife earns and handles the household’s money so that the scholar-rabbi husband can remain immersed in study. When Beck finally permitted herself some history, she sounded a crush note. “I, in life, concentrate on recollective delights,” she wrote. “That’s all you’ve got” (5:123). Don’t be fooled by the *farouche* tone, as right beside her was Old Academe. Beck left a rich archive and legacy for her students and for us. Her hundreds of artworks, copious journals, scores of letters, and interviews, articles, and lectures held by the Rosemarie Beck Foundation will dazzle, encourage, and provoke us for years to come.

1. Rosemarie Beck quoted in “Rosemarie Beck Panel Discussion, Part I,” New York University, August 2013, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YDzHT9FQ-8SA> (accessed 15 July 2014).

2. Rosemarie Beck, Journal 6 (1963–65), 92–93. Original manuscripts held by the Rosemarie Beck Foundation, New York; paginated typescript copies cited by permission. The journals are numbered and dated: 1 (1949–53), 2 (1950–57), 3 (1957–58), 4 (1958–61), 5 (1960–63), and 6 (1963–65). Subsequent references in the text above include journal and page numbers in parentheses.

3. See Marika Herskovic, ed., *New York School Abstract Expressionists: A Complete Documentation of the New York Painting and Sculpture Annuals, 1951–1957* (Franklin Lakes, N.J.: New York School

Press, 2000), and Maggie Nelson, *Women, The New York School, and Other True Abstractions* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2007), 19.

4. Philip Guston, “From a Lecture at the University of Minnesota, 1978,” in Robert Storr, *Philip Guston* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1986), 109.

5. Rosemarie Beck, “In My Studio,” in Hilton Kramer, ed., *Perspectives on the Arts: Arts Yearbook 5* (New York: Horizon Press, 1961), 64.

6. Beck quoted in Martica Sawin, “Rosemarie Beck: Never Form but Forming,” in *Rosemarie Beck Paintings 1965–2000* (Dayton, Ohio: Wright State University Press, 2002), 4.

7. See Robert Phelps, *A Literary Life: A Scrapbook Almanac of the Anglo-American Literary Scene from 1900–1950* (New York: Chatto and Windus, 1970).

“The Greenest Meadow of a Minuet”

Nora Beck

Whenever I posed for my Aunt Becki in her studio on East Twelfth Street, the classical music station was on. She engaged with sounds as she sized me up. To a loud crescendo she took a metal tool, scraped colors off her picture, and at the cadence dumped them into a can.

Rosemarie Beck began studying the violin privately when she was eight or nine years old in New Rochelle, New York, and continued in high school. Her father, Samuel, was a classical music lover, who brought her to concerts and the occasional opera. Although she played violin at Oberlin College, she did not attend the conservatory, and was quickly drawn to art and art history. Later she played chamber music in the Woodstock Quartet and taught children violin. During her stays at artist colonies, she collaborated with fellows in chamber music groups, and while teaching at Middlebury College, she joined the Vermont Orchestra. She played less when she moved to New York City, and stopped in 1972 after a terrible automobile accident in the early summer hours on Cape Cod, while she was looking for a place to paint. She suffered damage to her left arm; she could still paint—but could no longer hold her violin comfortably.

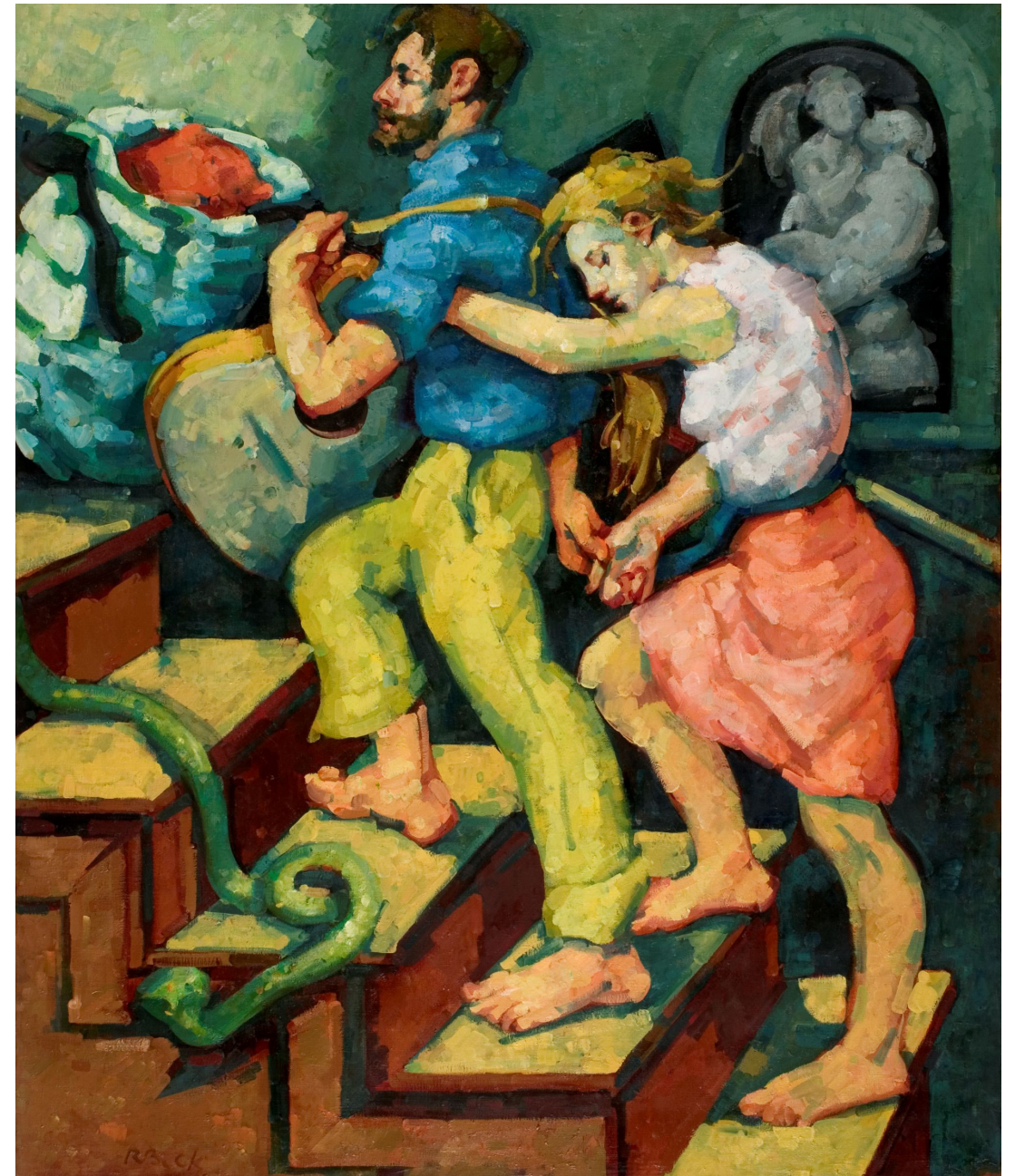
While Mozart spoke to her because of his nonchalant brilliance, she met her kindred spirit in Beethoven: his furious vitality, survival skills, and deep-thinking inspirations. She wrote in February 1954 about

playing Beethoven’s string quartet Op. 59, no. 3, “What about that slow movement? It makes one weep.”¹ Her husband, Robert, asked her, “You know what that [movement] means?” and she replied, “A cry after a lost innocence.”² And she continued, “It is a paean to not being at the mercy of one’s nature.” And in the same journal entry, she related music to art, “Art is better. It is a boat song, a voyage out of the body’s pain into the greenest meadow of a minuet where only abstract values count, and there is a heaven and a father. It’s music requiring redemption.”

Becki may have captured her metaphysical thinking in pictures of music. A favorite subject: Orpheus seduces the gods with sound. In her *Orpheus in the Underworld* (1974-75) he plays an enormous cello to a group of interested listeners. In *Death on the Stairs* (1970), a bearded figure, who looks like her son, leads a sickly Eurydice up a flight of stairs; a guitar hangs around his neck. Her *House of Venus* (1994) includes a violin and its bow and a score strewn on the table, a kaleidoscope of flowers, books, a female sculpture, and flowing red fabric. While the music is not physically heard, it is “heard” in lines, textures, and colors. Becki strove for harmony in her pictures, the colors jumping off the flat surface in a polyphonic swirl.

1. Rosemarie Beck, Journal 2 (1950–57), 12.

2. Ibid., 24.



Death on the Stairs, 1970, cat. 42 (photo by Loren Nelson)

Threadstrokes

Namita Gupta Wiggers

Rosemarie Beck stitches like a painter, handling each thread as if it were a brushstroke, building figures and scenes through color and line. Beck described her interest in embroideries in the 1970s as follows:

Their charm to me and delight is that they were practical. . . . I could decorate the house with them. . . . And they had another usefulness: the joyful mode of improvisation rather than the serious mode of discovery. . . . I could test my serious work in this lighter mode.¹

Her remarks reveal how easily she could employ needlework as a means of creative exploration. Which came first, embroidery or painting? Who taught Beck to use a needle and thread—her maternal aunt Magda, who was a seamstress?² Was embroidery a childhood pastime, part of a girl's education at home? Given the Beck family's ethnic heritage, how much was Rosemarie exposed to brightly colored traditional Hungarian embroidery in her early years?

Although her stitching does resemble that employed in folk embroidery from Eastern Europe, Beck's intention was neither technical perfection nor to fill in a flat, ornamental design. She creates dimensional planes with colored thread. When viewed from the back, her embroideries display an utter lack of economy, they are nearly as built up as the fronts. Yet her understanding of how these materials behave is clear. If pulled too tightly, the floss causes tension, ultimately distorting the base fabric and making it difficult if not

impossible to complete a coherent image. Beck's embroideries lie flat, proof that she knew how needle, thread, and fabric work and how to adapt them for the questions she wished to explore.

Embroidery, however, has its limitations. Thread consumes physical space. Brushstrokes, on the other hand, can lead to infinite variations on canvas. Beck explained towards the end of her life that she sometimes did not know when a painting was done, stopping only when the canvas became "icky."³ Working in oils, she implies, can lead to continual self-critique. As color studies, the embroideries reveal how markmaking in one medium supported Beck's work in another.

Although she separated them from her "serious" art, her works in thread and fabric are hardly a side note in this prolific artist's oeuvre. Considering the tenor of the scene she had entered as a painter—New York in the 1950s at the height of a testosterone-driven Abstract Expressionism—Beck's relegation of needlework to a realm of pleasure and the home is no surprise. Her embroideries bear little correlation to the emerging fiber arts movement of the 1970s, with its emphasis on wall hangings, large sculptural forms, and feminist critique.⁴ Rather, Beck's embroideries are experimental vehicles for thinking through her painting. There is no question that they were anything else for the artist. Her mode of markmaking and color studies through



Falling Icarus, 1983, cat. 7 (photo by Chris Carone, New York, courtesy Lori Bookstein Fine Art, New York)

embroidery raise broader questions about how we can better understand the influences on an artist outside of formal education, and how the dismissal of "women's work" leaves gaping holes in our ability fully to understand contemporary art.

1. Rosemarie Beck quoted in Kim Levin, "Conversation with Rosemarie Beck," *Arts Magazine* 53 (February 1979), 106.

2. Nora Beck, personal communication, 13 October 2014.

3. Beck quoted in Jennifer Samet, "Interview with Rosemarie Beck," 7 November 2002, n.p., jennifersamet.com/interviews/pdfs/rosemarie_beck.pdf (accessed 7 November 2014).

4. See Elissa Auther, *String, Felt, Thread: The Hierarchy of Art and Craft in American Art* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

Drawing and Drama

Prudence F. Roberts

In 2002, towards the end of her long and rich career, Rosemarie Beck spoke of her attraction to narrative art. Although she had won recognition for her abstract paintings, in the late 1950s she moved back to representational imagery. “I must have been a secret realist all along,” she noted, “because I had never stopped drawing from the figure.”¹ Over the years, Beck produced several thousand figure drawings, including the selection from 1991 and 2003 seen at the Helzer Art Gallery. These are complex works, even when they are seemingly direct and straightforward. Decisive contour lines in ink capture a momentary pose, the tilt of a head, or the gesture of an outstretched hand. Graphite hatch marks model a thigh, or suggest the shadows behind a standing woman. The drawings are studies, they are musings in shorthand for more expansive projects, they are acute observations of the body, and they are working documents. They are filled with humor, movement, and a sensuous delight in the human form. And they are theatrical: figures announce themselves like characters in a play, inhabiting the white paper as if it were a stage.

This sense of drama is not surprising. Beck had loved theater since she was in high school, where she spent much of her time in the shop, learning to paint sets and apply stage makeup. She continued her fascination with stagecraft during her years at Oberlin College, as she also studied

music and art history, discovering paintings by such artists as Titian and Rembrandt who frequently derived their subjects from literature and from Greek and Roman classics. Like these artists and those of her own generation, Beck found source material in mythology, returning again and again to certain characters and themes. For painters Mark Rothko, Adolf Gottlieb, or Jackson Pollock, myth for a time provided a visual vocabulary to express elemental, primordial truths. The symbols they evoked became increasingly abstract and freed from their narrative context. In contrast, Beck was attracted not only to those symbolic characters but also to the narratives and the dialogues, both spoken and enacted, which connected them. Her paintings focus on key moments in Sophocles’ Theban tragedies and Shakespeare’s plays. She immersed herself in *The Tempest*, for example, with its captivating first line, “On a ship at sea. A tempestuous noise of thunder and lightning heard.” Beck recalled, “I spent five or six years working on that. Very rich, with seascapes, full of characters, wedding scenes, death scenes.”²

Beck’s drawings, which frequently include two or three figures, are the starting point for her narrative compositions. The challenge of making a coherent painting, of placing several players in convincing space, traces back to these drawings where she deftly captures communications: body language, eye



Untitled (Two Female Nudes), 1991, cat. 28 (photo by Loren Nelson)

contact, or physical attraction. While it is fascinating to connect specific drawings to her larger works—to find figures and poses echoed in paint and embroidery floss—that relationship is not necessary to appreciate the drawings as works solid and complete unto themselves. In them we find Beck’s mastery of the human form and the human condition.

1. Rosemarie Beck quoted in Martica Sawin, “Rosemarie Beck,” *Woman’s Art Journal* 26, no. 1

(Summer 2005), 4.

2. Beck quoted in Jennifer Samet, “Interview with Rosemarie Beck,” 7 November 2002, n.p. [19], jennifersamet.com/interviews/pdfs/rosemarie_beck.pdf (accessed 7 November 2014).



Icarus and Daedalus, 1983, cat. 8 (photo by Loren Nelson)

Checklist of the Exhibition

Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education

1. *Daedalus and Icarus*, n.d.
Embroidery on cloth
14 x 16 in.
Lori Bookstein Fine Art, New York
2. *Untitled (Bathers)*, n.d.
Embroidery on cloth
15 x 19 1/2 in.
Lori Bookstein Fine Art, New York
3. *Untitled (Birds)*, n.d.
Embroidery on cloth
12 x 32 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland
4. *Atalanta*, 1980
Embroidery on cloth
15 x 17 in.
Lori Bookstein Fine Art, New York
5. *Atalanta*, 1980
Embroidery on cloth
21 x 14 in.
Lori Bookstein Fine Art, New York
6. *Bathers*, c. 1982
Embroidery on cloth
8 1/2 x 10 in.
Lori Bookstein Fine Art, New York
7. *Falling Icarus*, 1983
Embroidery on cloth
20 1/2 x 16 in.
Lori Bookstein Fine Art, New York

8. *Icarus and Daedalus*, 1983
Oil on canvas
24 x 30 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

9. *Atalanta*, 1985
Embroidery on cloth
15 x 20 in.
Lori Bookstein Fine Art, New York

10. *Daedalus and Icarus*, 1985
Embroidery on cloth
15 x 18 in.
Lori Bookstein Fine Art, New York

11. *Untitled (Pastoral)*, 1986
Embroidery on cloth
23 x 17 in.
Lori Bookstein Fine Art, New York

12. *Antigone and Ismene*, 1989
Embroidery on cloth
16 x 14 1/2 in.
Lori Bookstein Fine Art, New York

13. *Antigone*, 1990
Embroidery on cloth
13 x 18 in.
Lori Bookstein Fine Art, New York

14. *Antigone and Ismene*, 1990
Embroidery on cloth
15 x 12 in.
Lori Bookstein Fine Art, New York

15. *Figures in Landscape*, 1991
Embroidery on cloth
25 1/2 x 26 1/2 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

Helzer Art Gallery, Portland Community College Rock Creek

16. *Rosette*, n.d.
Embroidery on cloth
20 1/2 x 26 1/2 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

17. *The Tempest, Act IV, 1*, 1979
Oil on canvas
30 x 48 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

18. *Untitled (Female Nude)*, 1991
Graphite on paper
11 x 8 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

19. *Untitled (Girl Standing)*, 1991
Graphite on paper
12 1/2 x 9 1/2 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

20. *Untitled (Nude Man and Woman)*, 1991
Graphite on paper
12 1/2 x 16 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland



Untitled (Three Standing Figures), 1991, cat. 27 (photo by Loren Nelson)

21. *Untitled (Seated Female Nude)*, 1991
Ink on paper
10 3/4 x 8 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

22. *Untitled (Seated Nude)*, 1991
Graphite on paper
8 x 10 1/2 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

23. *Untitled (Seated Nudes)*, 1991
Ink on paper
9 x 11 1/4 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

24. *Untitled (Seated Woman)*, 1991
Graphite on paper
15 1/2 x 12 1/2 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

25. *Untitled (Standing Male Nude)*, 1991
Graphite on paper
12 1/2 x 9 1/2 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

26. *Untitled (Three Seated Nudes)*, 1991
Graphite on paper
9 x 14 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

27. *Untitled (Three Standing Figures)*, 1991
Ink on paper
10 1/2 x 8 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

28. *Untitled (Two Female Nudes)*, 1991
Ink on paper
7 3/4 x 10 1/2 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

29. *Untitled (Two Female Nudes)*, 1991
Ink on paper
8 x 10 1/2 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

30. *Untitled (Two Female Nudes)*, 1991
Ink on paper
10 1/2 x 8 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

31. *Untitled (Two Nudes with Dog)*, 1991
Ink on paper
11 x 8 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

32. *Untitled (Two Standing Nudes)*, 1991
Graphite on paper
11 x 8 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

33. *Untitled (Female Figure)*, 2003
Mixed media on paper
6 x 4 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

34. *Untitled (Male Portrait)*, 2003
Graphite, ink on paper
6 x 4 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

35. *Untitled (Seated Figure)*, 2003
Mixed media on paper
6 x 4 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

36. *Untitled (Three Figures)*, 2003
Ink on paper
4 x 6 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

37. *Untitled (Three Figures)*, 2003
Mixed media on paper
4 x 6 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

Lincoln Hall, Portland State University

38. *Women Sewing*, n.d.
Oil on canvas
43 x 49 1/2 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

39. *Two with Horse*, 1964
Oil on canvas
24 x 30 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

40. *Two on a Terrace*, 1968
Oil on canvas
60 x 76 in.
Rosemarie Beck Foundation, New York



The Tempest (Prospero, Miranda, Ariel), 1976, cat. 44 (photo by Loren Nelson)

41. *Watcher Watched*, 1969
Oil on canvas
54 x 67 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

42. *Death on the Stairs*, 1970
Oil on canvas
60 x 50 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

43. *Eurydice Mourned*, 1971
Oil on canvas
24 x 30 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

44. *The Tempest (Prospero, Miranda, Ariel)*, 1976
Oil on canvas
40 x 50 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

45. *The Rehearsal*, 1982-3
Oil on canvas
52 x 60 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

46. *Diana and Actaeon*, 1984
Oil on canvas
64 x 54 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

47. *Antigone Burying Polynices*, 1991
Oil on canvas
64 x 50 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

48. *Antigone and Ismene*, 1993
Oil on canvas
40 x 44 in.
Collection of Nora Beck, Portland

Chronology

1923	Born 8 July in Westchester County, New York to Samuel Beck and Margit Weiss Beck	1957	Begins teaching at Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York
1924	Birth of sister, Antoinette	1960	Travels to Italy, spending time in Florence
1930	Birth of brother, James	1972	Joins faculty at Queens College, City University of New York; in a car accident, suffers injuries which force her to give up violin
1939	Graduates from Tilden High School, Brooklyn	1984	Appointed full professor at Queens College
1944	B.A. in art history, Oberlin College, Ohio	1989	Death of husband
1945	Attends Institute of Fine Arts, New York University; marries Robert Phelps, 14 September	1990	Retires from Queens College, begins teaching at New York Studio School
1949	Birth of son, Roger	2003	Dies of lung cancer on 15 July in New York
1950	Informal study with Robert Motherwell and Bradley Walker Tomlin		

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